

# Engaging Men and Boys in Domestic Violence Prevention Strategies

## *An Invitation to the Courts*

In California as well as nationwide, thousands of judges, court staff, attorneys, domestic violence advocates, law enforcement personnel, and other professionals engage daily in the battle to intervene after domestic violence, helping to protect the victims and their children, to hold perpetrators accountable, and to prevent future incidents of abuse. Many of these professionals benefit from superb credentials, improved legal tools, and ongoing, practical training about this complex, widespread social problem. Will this vast justice system response someday bring an end to domestic violence? If society continues to focus vast resources exclusively on intervention measures, widespread prevention of domestic violence before it occurs becomes unlikely.

This article will discuss the prevention of domestic violence, focusing in particular on efforts to engage men and boys in prevention strategies. It will briefly discuss prevention and how it contrasts with traditional intervention, describe early public awareness and prevention strategies, review research on men's attitudes toward domestic violence, and summarize some recent examples of research-based initiatives to engage men and boys in domestic violence prevention. The article will also suggest a potential process for analysis of future court policy and program design with respect to prevention.

The article does not focus on judges' prevention efforts performed outside of the court; many of these creative endeavors demonstrate individual judges' dedicated leadership to stop domestic violence in the community. Rather, this article suggests a process for determining appropriate prevention measures to incorporate in the daily work of judges and court staff. While intervention must continue until every victim of domestic violence achieves safety and receives services, the courts also must put significant effort into collaboration with broad segments of their communities to prevent domestic violence before it occurs.

### **TRADITIONAL INTERVENTION RESPONSES TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

During the past 25 years, the movement to end domestic violence in the United States has achieved tremendous successes in assisting some victims

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Despite the successes of intervention efforts in reaching and assisting battered women, domestic violence continues to be entrenched in society. A growing number of policymakers and advocates, in consideration of the long-term social and human costs of domestic violence, are exploring strategies to prevent violence before it occurs. This article discusses the prevention of domestic violence, focusing in particular on efforts to engage men and boys in prevention strategies. It briefly discusses prevention and how it contrasts with traditional intervention, describes early public awareness and prevention strategies, reviews research on men's attitudes toward domestic violence, and summarizes some recent examples

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of research-based initiatives to engage men and boys. It also suggests a potential process for analysis of future court policy and program design with respect to prevention. ■

to secure safety and access services, classifying domestic violence as a serious crime and imposing criminal sanctions on persons who use violence in intimate relationships, making social service institutions more responsive, and creating public awareness. Specific strategies to end domestic violence have concentrated on responding to the immediate needs of battered women and their children; raising public awareness about domestic violence as a crime; bolstering criminal sanctions against perpetrators; developing batterers' intervention programs; and coordinating communities' responses through the collaboration of advocacy programs, justice systems, and social services.

Public policy has directed most resources to address domestic violence and sexual assault toward criminal justice responses and social services for abused women and their children. Thus, in many communities, through the Violence Against Women Act,<sup>1</sup> federal funds support shelters for battered women; counseling and other services for violence survivors, rape victims, and their children; and specialized domestic violence courts or court dockets to increase safety for victims and accountability for perpetrators. These traditional responses that focus on intervening in domestic violence and sexual assault are critical. Intervention activities must continue to be provided and improved, regardless of any initiatives developed to prevent violence before it occurs.

## **EXTENT OF THE COURTS' WORK INVOLVING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

Much of the courts' existing work involves issues of domestic violence directly or indirectly. Consider the following statistics:

- In 2002, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1,455 people were killed by an intimate partner, representing almost 16 percent of all murders.<sup>2</sup>
- Between 1998 and 2002, females were 84 percent of spousal abuse victims and 86 percent of victims of abuse by a boyfriend or girlfriend.<sup>3</sup>
- Of 85,505 convicted violent offenders confined in a local jail in 2002, 30 percent had victimized an intimate partner.<sup>4</sup>
- The American Psychological Association has found that 40 to 60 percent of the men who abuse their wives also abuse their children.<sup>5</sup>
- In homes where partner abuse occurs, children are 1,500 times more likely to be abused.<sup>6</sup>
- Fathers who batter mothers are twice as likely to seek sole physical custody of their children as are nonviolent fathers.<sup>7</sup>

Although many victims of domestic violence do not access the court system, these statistics alone indicate potential court entry points where the judiciary finds itself grappling with domestic violence issues: criminal court, juvenile court, and family law court. Other entry points might be probate court if a matter involves an elder victim of domestic violence or a guardianship proceeding for a minor, or a court's self-help center when a party does not have an attorney. In fact, the issue of domestic violence is endemic to the court system, giving every judicial officer a reason to care about it.

## PROMISING VIOLENCE PREVENTION STRATEGIES

Despite the successes of intervention efforts in reaching and assisting battered women, domestic violence continues to be entrenched in society. As work to end domestic violence evolves, much of what was called "prevention" just a few years ago would now be characterized as intervention or some combination of the two. Traditional responses to domestic violence included services to battered women and intervention by the justice system in selected cases, as well as elements of prevention such as media watches and educational programming created primarily by advocates for battered women. During the past 10 years, domestic violence cases involving high-profile persons and public education campaigns have dramatically raised awareness about the issue. Consequently, in a groundbreaking 2001 survey of over 3,300 American women, 92 percent of the respondents identified the reduction of domestic violence and sexual assault as the top priority of future focus for the women's movement.<sup>8</sup> Additional research reveals that the majority of the American public as a whole recognizes domestic violence as a serious problem.<sup>9</sup>

A growing number of policymakers and advocates, in consideration of the long-term social and human costs of domestic violence, are exploring strategies to prevent violence before it occurs. These strategies, which emphasize prevention and the changing of social norms, must target teens, young parents, and their children; violence perpetrators; and men generally. Research and programs, for example, are focusing on interventions with vulnerable children and youth, as well as on universal supports for young families, as strategies to prevent violence against women in adulthood. The following are examples:

- **Treating children exposed to violence at home.** This strategy, which uses intervention to achieve prevention, focuses on mental health support for children exposed to violence as well as strengthening of protective factors in the children's environment through work with parents. Project examples include Chicago's Child-Parent Centers, Early Head Start, and hospital-based programs in Boston and San Francisco.<sup>10</sup>
- **Providing supports for young and vulnerable parents.** Young parents could benefit from the inclusion of violence prevention services in a range of in-home and center-based parenting support programs. Nurse home visitation programs, for

example, have shown very promising results from working with first-time parents, many of them teenagers or young persons with multiple challenges.<sup>11</sup>

- **Strengthening of mentoring, parenting education, and other violence prevention strategies in programs for vulnerable youth.** Well-designed, ongoing mentoring and role-modeling programs can help young persons improve social interactions and develop healthy relationships. Promising programs include Big Brothers Big Sisters, Safe Dates, and Expect Respect: A School-Based Program Promoting Safe and Healthy Relationships for Youth.<sup>12</sup>
- **Incorporating violence prevention services in reentry programs for youth aged 14–24 who leave detention in the juvenile justice system or incarceration in a federal or state prison or local jail.** Mentoring, positive parenting, and violence prevention programs can help juveniles released from detention and prisoners returning from incarceration reunite with their families, lower the risk of harm to family members, and reduce the possibility of future arrest. Examples include La Bodega de la Familia (Family Justice, Inc.), a New York City program that focuses in part on recovering drug abusers returning from prison.<sup>13</sup>
- **Public education and leadership programs targeting men, teens, and children.** Public awareness and education campaigns can promote positive norms of behavior for teen relationships, engage men and boys in recognizing opportunities to connect positively and nonviolently with children and other young persons, and support young parents in their child-rearing roles.

The courts have contact with many persons targeted by these prevention strategies. In addition, the courts serve as resource referral points for connecting many of these programs with persons who would likely benefit. Therefore, the courts appear to be in an ideal position to participate in some of promising prevention practices and to develop additional strategies that can engage court system professionals in universal prevention measures without compromising the fairness and impartiality demanded by codes of ethics and expected by the public.

## RESEARCH ON MEN'S ATTITUDES TO VIOLENCE

Traditionally, men have not been a major part of any popular effort to address domestic violence, despite important work in selected programs to redefine masculinity and to confront social norms that favor men over women. In fact, for many years in the context of domestic violence, men were mentioned almost exclusively as perpetrators of abuse or tacit supporters of systems that perpetuate violence. Work that focused primarily on services to victims and on criminal responsibility for violent men created at best an unwelcoming tone for engaging men. Thus, nonviolent men who might want to make a difference on these issues, other than men working in related social justice or academic areas, found it difficult to locate entry points for involvement.

During the past few years a shift to a more welcoming tone has created new opportunities for engaging large numbers of nonviolent men in domestic violence prevention in normal activities of their lives. National public opinion research conducted in 2000 provided valuable insight about men's attitudes concerning domestic violence and actions in which men were willing to engage regarding this issue. The

#### **THE VALUE OF PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH IN DEVELOPING A PUBLIC EDUCATION CAMPAIGN**

Public opinion research is enormously important, if not critical, for the success of any public awareness or education campaign, particularly when the objective is not simply awareness but a change in behavior. Fulfilling a different role than behavior research, a strategic, outcome-based attitudinal research approach provides results that can effect attitudinal and behavioral change. The results also assist sponsoring organizations in developing concrete plans and communications to achieve their goals.

A public education campaign designed to effect attitudinal and behavioral change must gain the attention of the audience members before they will consider the message. Before they act on the message, however, audience members must accept it and be motivated by a belief that it is important, necessary, or socially desirable. Public opinion research is integral not only in determining the most salient approach and messages but also in identifying the most effective messengers and mediums to achieve a campaign's objectives. It is also critical for understanding the underlying values that inform and shape people's opinions on the relevant issues.

Public opinion research that includes both quantitative and qualitative components can help in setting objectives for a campaign, segmenting and profiling the audiences, identifying message strategies, and establishing baseline measurements of targeted attitudes and self-reported behaviors. Tracking surveys can be conducted at later intervals to measure awareness of the campaign, the target audience's degree of exposure and attention to the messages, and correlated changes in self-reported attitudes or behaviors targeted by the campaign.

Segmenting the audience is a particularly important component of this research because different subgroups within the larger audience will move from attention to a message to behavior for different reasons. The research identifies when and under what circumstances different groups of people will listen, respond, and ultimately act.

Qualitative research can provide important and valuable insights. Often, the targeting of specific populations is the result of epidemiological surveillance or some other method that does not provide any information about the social, psychological, and environmental context of targeted attitudes or behaviors. Message design and strategy benefits from understanding the audience's in-group catch phrases and slang, identifying sources or spokespersons who will attract the attention of the target audiences, and identifying unanticipated social or environmental constraints to changing a population's behavior. Qualitative research allows for the flexibility to probe where necessary to better understand an individual's thought process regarding specific areas of interest.—*Abigail Davenport (Peter Hart Research Associates)*

research included a national public opinion poll of 912 adult American men from diverse demographics, dial sessions (structured, computerized systems that monitor responses) to explore men's and women's reactions to various media segments, and a series of five focus groups primarily with men of different ages and races.<sup>14</sup> The survey findings showed that men were willing to intervene directly in violent situations if they knew one of the parties involved. Interestingly, the intervenor was most likely to engage in a discussion with the known party, regardless of that person's gender. Before this research, it was assumed that men would most likely intervene through a discussion with other men.<sup>15</sup>

The research also revealed men's willingness to take the time to get involved in important community and public efforts to stop violence against women. Men reported that they were most likely to take the time to petition elected officials to strengthen anti-domestic violence laws and to talk with children about the importance of healthy, violence-free relationships. In contrast, men stated that they were least likely to participate in a rally against domestic violence. Finally, when asked which of a list of reasons was the greatest barrier to active involvement in prevention, men most often selected the failure to ask men to become involved.<sup>16</sup>

Focus groups gauged participants' reactions to various types of messages in sample ads, yielding some interesting results:

- The "men as role models" theme had potential as an effective message to engage men in prevention of violence against women. Communicating an inclusive message that is not limited to men as fathers but as role models for boys in general would be an important way to reach multiple cultures and ages.
- A clear and simple message must be communicated on the issue.
- To avoid racist undertones, which negatively affected all surveyed men regardless of race, visual images must represent persons of all races.
- Negative themes interfere with men's ability to perceive the message as applicable to them and can easily trigger feelings that all men are being considered as potential batterers.<sup>17</sup>

Other research indicates that most males are uncomfortable with violence against women and with the attitudes, behaviors, and language of men who commit such violence.<sup>18</sup> Most men seek consent in intimate relationships and are uncomfortable with language and behavior that objectify and hurt women.<sup>19</sup>

Polling conducted over the past several years shows that women are more likely than men to identify domestic violence as an "extremely important" issue, more likely to report that they would do something to help reduce violence if they knew how to help, and less likely to accept rationalizations for the violence. One conclusion is that targeting men and boys for prevention efforts makes good sense because there

is significant “room for change” on attitudinal and behavioral indicators as reported by men nationwide.

In summary, the following themes can be gleaned from research to date:

- Engage men positively by using a welcoming, nonaccusatory, and culturally diverse tone and by communicating to men through other men.
- Engage large numbers of nonviolent men and boys by giving them simple, clear roles in educational activities that help to prevent violence against women and children.
- Engage men to stand publicly against violence by giving them an opportunity to state their commitment and engage their peers and families, giving men the opportunity to play a central role in prevention campaigns.
- Expand alliances of men by reaching out to new (and perhaps unlikely) partners with clear, simple messages they can incorporate in their existing work. Alliances might include, for example, men who for many years have worked with men who wish to overcome their violence, faith-based groups, organizations that promote responsible fatherhood, and men who work in the justice or social service system to intervene in violence against women.
- Engage men as leaders, role models, and mentors on the issue by creating opportunities for men to talk to other men, men to talk to boys, and teens to talk to other teens in the usual contexts of their lives (e.g., coaches talking to athletes).
- Engage men who are willing to become activists—for example, men who are already involved in violence intervention, prevention, or related activities, including community activists, social service and government workers, and academics, by giving them opportunities to share learning, collaborate, and expand the depth of their expertise and field of knowledge.

## **PREMISES BEHIND PREVENTION FOCUSED ON MEN AND BOYS**

Much of the work to address domestic violence during the past three decades has been predicated on the belief that violence is a learned behavior that can be unlearned. Similarly, innovative prevention efforts employing public-education strategies have been based on the conviction that social norms condoning violence can be shifted. Indeed, educational efforts aimed at changing social norms have had considerable success in addressing alcohol, tobacco, and drug use and abuse in high school, college, and community settings.<sup>20</sup>

Within the field of domestic violence, experts agree that current, predominant social norms play a significant role in sanctioning and perpetuating inappropriate

male behavior. Thus, men can play a powerful role in promoting more positive attitudes and behavior with regard to violence against women and children.<sup>21</sup>

Males of middle school and high school age also have a role to play in preventing violence against women, especially relationship violence. In the 2000 survey, almost 9 in 10 men expressed support for incorporating into middle and high school curricula discussions about violence against women and ways to prevent it.<sup>22</sup> Men's thinking about and response to domestic violence therefore appears to be malleable; men pay attention to what other men think, say, and do and may be willing to take action if given the tools and embraced as potential partners with women in strategies to end violence. The research supports widespread public education and involvement campaigns targeting men and boys for participation in the prevention of domestic violence. And men, as a group, seem open to receiving messages and engaging in various levels of activities against violence.

### **PREVENTION ACTIVITIES FOCUSED ON MEN AND BOYS**

This section discusses several examples of specific activities designed to engage male "bystanders" and youth in preventing domestic violence. The term *bystanders* in this context means nonviolent men who are family members, friends, teammates, classmates, and colleagues with whom all persons have contact in the course of their everyday lives. Bystanders may also include men whose peers engage in domestic violence.

Three initial, connected missions emerged based on the polling research: (1) involve men directly as models of violence prevention behavior and mentors to the next generation; (2) elicit a public, personal commitment from men to stand against violence; and (3) provide resources and build the capacity of violence prevention advocates to work with men. In pursuit of these missions, the Family Violence Prevention Fund developed a suite of three ongoing programs: Coaching Boys into Men, Founding Fathers, and the Building Partnerships Initiative to End Men's Violence.

#### **Coaching Boys into Men**

Coaching Boys into Men was launched nationally in February 2002 to all major commercial television stations, broadcast networks, cable networks, local cable affiliates, commercial radio stations, and the *New York Times*. The campaign encourages men to talk to boys early and often about appropriate ways to treat women. Public service announcements (PSAs) for television, radio, and print media emphasize that boys learn from watching men and encourage men to act as role models and communicate with boys about domestic violence. The PSAs also pose questions about the right time to raise with boys the issue of domestic violence. Coaching Boys into Men materials include tips for talking to boys of different ages, sample talking points, examples of times to talk, and starting points for conversations.



The Coaching Boys into Men campaign was designed to offer men a clear and manageable role in helping to solve the problem of domestic violence. To maximize the campaign's impact, strategic national partners were included from the beginning: the National High School Athletic Coaches Association, the New York Yankees, the San Francisco Giants, Major League Soccer, and local and regional sports-related groups.

The campaign was assessed through a study by the Advertising Council, issued in February 2005, which measured public perception about the importance of the issue, awareness of the ad campaign, and attitudinal and behavioral change.<sup>23</sup> Significantly, the study produced the following findings:

- About 9 in 10 adults (and 84 percent of men) “strongly agree” that men can help reduce domestic violence by talking to boys and feel it is extremely important that they do so.
- Respondents who saw the PSAs were significantly more likely than those who did not to agree that men can help solve the problem of domestic violence by discussing it with boys.
- There was a steady and significant increase in the proportion of men surveyed who had actually taken action and spoken to boys about violence against women—from 29 percent in November 2001 to 41 percent in February 2005.
- Awareness of the PSA campaign increased almost fivefold from benchmark levels, rising from 3 percent at benchmark to 14 percent in February 2005.<sup>24</sup>

Initial results from the Coaching Boys into Men program demonstrate that an appropriate delivery mechanism (in this case an extended sports metaphor) can engage men in specific, concrete actions to prevent domestic violence. The message that men can make a difference in preventing violence by talking to the young men and boys close to them is clear and uncomplicated. Future campaigns can use a modeling or mentoring strategy in other contexts that resonate with men and engage them in clear, positive, manageable actions with boys to prevent domestic violence.

### **Founding Fathers**

The Founding Fathers campaign, initiated in 2003, was based on the theory that publicizing men's individual involvement, and thereby inspiring the involvement of their peers, was a critical component of a strategy to prevent domestic violence. The goal was to create a public role for men in the movement to end domestic violence, complementing the private role encouraged by Coaching Boys into Men. Some 350 men from all walks of life mobilized in 2003 for an unprecedented public declaration condemning domestic violence.

The Founding Fathers declaration, written by a group of five men, appeared in a full page of the *New York Times* on Father's Day 2003, with each of the 350 men listed

as a Founding Father.<sup>25</sup> This public expression underscored the importance of men's commitment to involve and validate the support of their peers. While some Founding Fathers' commitments were purely public, many were moved to pledge more extensive personal involvement. In addition to the *New York Times* declaration, for example, some Founding Fathers created personalized letter-writing campaigns to friends and family, hosted a series of open discussions among men on domestic violence, and donated resources and gifts. Some Founding Fathers even hosted meetings with other men to encourage them to declare their commitment publicly.

The Founding Fathers campaign was not evaluated formally, but anecdotal indicators were strong and positive: men expressed appreciation that Founding Fathers amplified measures to involve other bystanders. The campaign struck an emotional chord with both men and women as they tapped into vast personal constituencies of partners, friends, co-workers, and parents; men felt good about being placed at the leadership of what traditionally had been viewed as a women's issue. An informal survey among the campaign participants confirmed that the single most compelling reason for becoming Founding Fathers was "men setting an example for other men." The second most compelling reason was "men taking responsibility for an issue traditionally viewed as a women's issue."

### **The Building Partnerships Initiative to End Men's Violence**

The Coaching Boys into Men and Founding Fathers campaigns focus on engaging men as bystanders, role models, and fathers. The third prong of work with men and boys, the Building Partnerships Initiative (BPI), involves active collaboration between men and women working in traditional programs to end violence against women. The BPI was intended to inspire more activist men to take a stand against men's violence by tapping into work at the community level—in grassroots nonprofit organizations, schools, the workplace, and places of worship—in an effort to create a network of new constituencies and to build capacity in local communities.

The BPI promotes stronger partnerships among persons currently working to end violence and individuals and organizations with potential for a more active prevention role, with a special focus on engaging men and boys in this process. To permit a more comprehensive prevention agenda, the network includes new, nontraditional allies—groups such as unions, faith-based institutions, schools and universities, sports and social clubs, the private sector, and responsible-fatherhood organizations. The BPI was designed in consideration of certain limitations and opportunities presented in the field: (1) innovative program work is often carried out in relative isolation, providing few structures for information exchange; (2) nontraditional partners bring great untapped potential to prevention work; and (3) ecological models suggest that a greater variety of individuals, groups, and community organizations should play a role in ending men's violence.

The first phase of the BPI, which incorporated information technology (IT) tools to interact and network across wide geographical and professional divides, consisted of an “online discussion series” for practitioners of violence prevention and potential new partner organizations. The eight-week series took place through an e-mail discussion list and was supported by a discrete Web site.<sup>26</sup> The discussion covered four topics: building a “big tent,” learning from batterers’ intervention programs, working with fathers’ groups, and working with youth and schools. More than a thousand persons from all 50 states and 40 different countries signed on to the lively and fruitful discussions. Discussion participants made it clear that to engage men successfully in ending domestic violence, practitioners, community leaders, policymakers, and others must model respectful relationships and partnerships.

The second phase of the BPI provides to violence prevention practitioners and advocates an online toolkit for working with men and boys. The toolkit<sup>27</sup> contains guiding principles and “how-to” steps, training exercises, and background materials for working with men and boys. The toolkit builds on the momentum and connections made during the online discussion series to transform the conversations into practical steps for widespread prevention work with men and boys.

Because the BPI was recently implemented, analysis of the program is ongoing. Clearly, fatherhood programming (services to help men serve as responsible, involved fathers) provides a reservoir of experience in engaging men about intimate, familial relationships and in listening to men’s concerns. Despite tension between domestic violence prevention advocates and some fathers’ groups, bridges need to be constructed because of the simple reality that many children have ongoing contact with fathers who have used violence in the family. Ultimately, safety must take priority over healing and contact with a child. Thus, while widespread partnerships between fatherhood programs and violence prevention efforts seem to be in a nascent stage, father-involvement programs hold perhaps the greatest promise as partners in violence prevention.

## **EXISTING PREVENTION ACTIVITIES BY JUDGES**

The three research-based strategies described above serve as examples of the myriad programs that could be developed to engage men in the prevention of violence against women. Many judges already participate outside of court in their own strategies, based on their individual interests, to prevent domestic violence. Examples of judicial activities include

- training of faith-based leaders and communities regarding domestic violence;
- mentoring children in various contexts, such as sports and Big Brothers;

- various education activities, including hosting schools in the courtroom, participating in teen dating workshops, presentations at service clubs, violence clinics at law schools, and mock trials in schools, senior centers, and malls; and
- serving as examples in their own personal lives.

These judicial efforts in the community further the prevention of violence before it occurs. But they depend largely on the personal leadership commitment of a relatively small group of dedicated professionals. In addition to these individual measures and the strong violence intervention role served by the courts, judges and court staff can begin to incorporate prevention in the daily work of the judiciary. The remainder of this article suggests a process for beginning to address prevention in the courts.

### DEVELOPING PREVENTION STRATEGIES IN THE COURTS

The authors explored some examples of the current efforts to engage men and boys in strategies to prevent domestic violence, in the context of the more traditional service-based and justice-system responses that have greatly strengthened intervention. As noted, the concept of “prevention” has evolved over the past 25 years from a broad, all-encompassing label applied to *any* response to domestic violence to the current, more precise focus on activities that prevent violence before it occurs. Certainly the justice system must continue to treat domestic violence seriously as a crime and to intervene to help adult survivors achieve safety and protect their children. But prevention efforts also must expand dramatically to engage all members of society. Strategies to engage men and boys must incorporate some of the core concepts tested to date: clear, simple messages that are conveyed in the context of everyday lives, intergenerational role modeling to change social norms, and universal support of positive, healthy intimate relationships among all young persons. Working together, women and men can change attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that recognize violence as an acceptable means of human interaction.

Based on these premises, the courts can engage in a process for determining how to reach court users with effective, culturally diverse prevention messages. This process would involve the following steps:

- **Assembling the appropriate discussion group.** The courts need to begin prevention efforts with the right persons at the table. Initially, these would include judges, court administrative leadership, and possibly providers of ancillary services (e.g., family court services and facilitators, probation). Upon agreement that the court can and should move forward with prevention, the discussion group could be broadened to include community-based domestic violence service providers, batterers’ intervention programs, attorneys (plaintiff and defense), and others who can contribute to broadening the points of contact for prevention, as well as the development and implementation of prevention activities.

■ **Identification of potential prevention message points.** The court needs to identify appropriate points at which to reach court users with universal violence prevention measures. Criminal and juvenile delinquency courts, for example, have contact with large numbers of men and boys who are entering the court as defendants, detainees, victims, and witnesses. At what points during these contacts could the court engage men and boys in prevention messages or other measures? The court needs to consider several specific questions, including, for example:

- Are there points where judges personally can deliver universal violence prevention messages without compromising impartiality?
- Where specifically in the courthouse can prevention messages be given to all court users (e.g., videos and literature in waiting rooms or hallways, posters to educate the public)?

■ **Development and delivery of prevention activities.** Activities should consist of promising strategies that reach men and boys, such as the research-based initiatives outlined in this article. Essentially, these strategies engage men and boys in actions to which they appear receptive based on the research. Activities in the courts might range from delivering messages (verbally or electronically) to distribution of prevention awareness materials, including resources for users who currently experience violence. Through leadership, courts could also participate in constructing broad-based, inclusive prevention campaigns in the justice system, consisting of measures that ultimately could reduce the need for intervention by reaching large segments of society.

## CONCLUSION

Additional research will be needed to help shape new prevention strategies for men and boys. Moreover, these new efforts must connect with other prevention measures focused on teens and young persons. Primary prevention strategies are critical elements of future responses to domestic violence, and violence against women cannot be prevented without the central involvement of men and boys in changing social norms that currently sanction violence. Elements of a violence prevention focus involving men and boys include the following:

- heightened personal awareness about violence against women and girls
- responsible personal behavior with respect to relationships and violence
- positive involvement in the lives of young men and boys
- collaboration among male and female advocates and prevention professionals
- partnership building, pursuant to common goals, between programs that promote responsible fatherhood and violence prevention groups

- unequivocal public commitments by men that violence against women and girls will not be tolerated.

Efforts to engage men and boys in prevention of violence against women have just begun. There remain more questions than answers, but we know a great deal more now than a few short years ago. Future research can assist in determining answers to numerous questions, such as these:

- What else needs to be learned about men's potential responses to violence against women and girls? What questions do men need to be asked about how to involve them in prevention strategies?
- What entry points can engage larger groups of male bystanders to participate in small, doable violence prevention efforts that are easily performed as part of their daily lives?
- How can men become engaged in multiple, coordinated campaigns to promote social norms that foster healthy relationships? What key ingredients will foster this kind of involvement, which can deepen men's commitment to changing social norms?
- What are potential collaborations with efforts to prevent other forms of violence against women, such as sexual assault and stalking, and related violence, such as youth violence and community violence?
- What settings, such as schools, sporting events, workplaces, and the justice system, provide opportunities to connect men and boys with messages that promote healthy intimate relationships as alternatives to violence?

Future efforts to end abuse must emphasize prevention of violence before it occurs if we are to create a world in which women, children, and men can safely pursue and exercise their basic human rights. Prevention efforts not only must engage professionals and advocates who dedicate themselves to end abuse but also must welcome, encourage, and support persons in all walks of life—from all cultures, genders and gender identities and from all economic classes—to undertake activities in the course of their everyday lives. Only through multiple, universal, accessible prevention strategies can we hope to end violence before it occurs.

## NOTES

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4. *Id.* at 61.
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7. VIOLENCE AND THE FAMILY, *supra* note 5, at 40.
8. CTR. FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN, PROGRESS AND PERILS: NEW AGENDA FOR WOMEN 11 (2003), *available at* [www.advancewomen.org/womens\\_research/Progress&Perils.pdf](http://www.advancewomen.org/womens_research/Progress&Perils.pdf).
9. Advertising Council, Family Violence Prevention Fund Domestic Violence Prevention PSA Campaign General Market Tracking Survey (2005) (unpublished survey, on file with the *Journal of the Center for Families, Children & the Courts*).
10. Programs to treat children exposed to domestic violence include the Child Witness to Violence Project, Boston Medical Center (information available at [www.childwitnessstoviolence.org/about.html](http://www.childwitnessstoviolence.org/about.html)) and Child Trauma Research Project, San Francisco General Hospital. For lists and descriptions of resources, see the Web site of the National Center for Children Exposed to Violence, [www.ncccev.org/violence/domestic.html](http://www.ncccev.org/violence/domestic.html).
11. See D.L. Olds et al., Prenatal and Infancy Home Visitation by Nurses: A Program of Research (conference paper, Univ. of Md., Sch. of Pub. Policy, Welfare Reform Acad.), *available at* [www.welfareacademy.org/conf/papers/olds/prenatal.cfm](http://www.welfareacademy.org/conf/papers/olds/prenatal.cfm); see also references listed by the Administration for Children and Families of the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, *available at* [www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/opre/welfare\\_employ/economic\\_analysis/reports/effect\\_nursefam/nursefam\\_refs.html](http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/opre/welfare_employ/economic_analysis/reports/effect_nursefam/nursefam_refs.html).
12. See research reports listed by National Mentoring Center, [www.nwrel.org/mentoring/research.html](http://www.nwrel.org/mentoring/research.html).
13. See, e.g., Family Justice Web site, [www.familyjustice.org](http://www.familyjustice.org); Frank Rubino, *Doing Family Time*, HOPE, Mar./Apr. 2004, at 24, *available at* [www.familyjustice.org/assets/press/Hope\\_Article.pdf](http://www.familyjustice.org/assets/press/Hope_Article.pdf).
14. Peter D. Hart Research Assocs., Family Violence Prevention Fund Study No. 5702c (2000) (unpublished study, on file with the *Journal of the Center for Families, Children & the Courts*). Participants in the National Opinion Poll of Adult Men were aged 18–75. Of the 912 men who participated, 459 were Caucasian, 166 were African American, 139 were Hispanic, and 109 were of Asian descent. Twenty-three women and 24 men participated in two dial sessions. The five focus groups were Caucasian men aged 18–25, Caucasian men aged 26–55, African-American and Hispanic men aged 26–55, women aged 18–25, and African-American and Hispanic women aged 18–25.
15. *Id.*

**NOTES**

16. *Id.*

17. *Id.*

18. ALAN BERKOWITZ, FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION FUND, THE SOCIAL NORMS APPROACH TO VIOLENCE PREVENTION (2003), *available at* <http://toolkit.endabuse.org/Resources/TheSocial/view?searchterm=berkowitz>.

19. *Id.*

20. *Id.*

21. *Id.*

22. Hart, *supra* note 14.

23. Advertising Council, *supra* note 9.

24. *Id.*

25. To view the declaration, see <http://endabuse.org/programs/display.php3?DocID=9933>.

26. See [www.endabuse.org/bpi](http://www.endabuse.org/bpi).

27. See [www.endabuse.org/toolkit](http://www.endabuse.org/toolkit).